

WILLIAM FAULKNER'S "TEMPLE" OF INNOCENCE

AFTER twenty-nine years, and a sale approaching a million copies, William Faulkner's *Sanctuary* still displays a capacity to shock readers and exercise critics. This fact alone would seem to justify a new inspection of the novel, the more so since general critical opinion apparently has failed to define adequately the main theme of the action or to explain precisely the source and cause of the horror it arouses in the reader. Some portion of the critical failure is undoubtedly due to a reluctance to take the novel's more melodramatic events seriously: even those readers on whom *Sanctuary* has its most shocking impact may be inclined to dismiss it as little more than a contemptible effort to violate sensibility.

Discussion of *Sanctuary* usually begins with a reference to Faulkner's statement, in his introduction to the Modern Library edition of the novel, that the book was a "cheap idea, because it was deliberately conceived to make money." Those who find in this statement a reason for rejecting the novel out of hand evidently choose to disregard Faulkner's subsequent statement, in the same introduction, that he was willing to pay money in order to make *Sanctuary* worthy of *The Sound and the Fury* and of *As I Lay Dying*:

As I Lay Dying was published and I didn't remember the mss. of *Sanctuary* until Smith sent me the galleys. Then I saw that it was so terrible that there were but two things to do: tear it up or rewrite it. I thought again, "It might sell; maybe 10,000 of them will buy it." So I tore the galleys down and rewrote the book. It had been already set up once, so I had to pay for the privilege of rewriting it. . . .

Linton Massey's account of the galleys actually re-written by Faulkner is, however, the best refutation of those who would dismiss *Sanctuary* because of any commercial motivation it may have had.

Critical opinion about *Sanctuary* has ranged from the views of those who have read it in psychological terms as an expression of man's fear of sexual impotence to the views of those who have read it in more or less sociological terms as an attack on exploitive modernism. The latter view has been most widely held, and essential to it is the idea that the gangster Popeye is a symbol, or allegorical figure, of all that is most inhuman in modern capitalistic society. The direction for the view that the book is an attack on "modernism" was apparently first established in an early essay by George Marion O'Donnell, who schematized the meaning in these terms:

the pattern of the allegory is something like this: Southern Womanhood Corrupted but Undeified (Temple Drake), in the company of the Corrupted Tradition (Gowan Stevens, a professional Virginian), falls into the clutches of Amoral Modernism (Popeye), which is itself impotent, but which with the aid of its strong ally Natural Lust ("Red") rapes Southern Womanhood unnaturally and then seduces her so satisfactorily that her corruption is total, and she becomes the tacit ally of Modernism. Meanwhile Pore White Trash (Goodwin). . . .

O'Donnell's tendency to "read Faulkner with an allegorical rigidity" has been modified by such critics as Malcolm Cowley and Robert Penn Warren. Still, even these later critics see Popeye as being essentially a representation of modernism. Popeye, Warren has said, "is a kind of dehumanized robot, a mere mechanism, an abstraction, and as such he is a symbol for what Faulkner thinks of as modernism, for the society of finance capitalism."

There is, however, much in *Sanctuary* to upset a straightforward equation of Popeye with "modernism," and to suggest instead that he is ultimately representative of an evil more primal and profound than that which one might identify with some particular political or economic system. One

need only consider, for example, these two descriptions of Popeye:

He smells black, Benbow thought; he smells like that black stuff that ran out of Bovary's mouth and down upon her bridal veil when they raised her head.

He [Benbow] was thinking . . . of Popeye's black presence lying upon the house like the shadow of something no larger than a match falling monstrous and portentous upon something else otherwise familiar and everyday and twenty times its size . . . and Popeye somewhere in the outer darkness peaceful with insects and frogs and yet filled too with Popeye's presence in black and nameless threat.

But Popeye is best defined by the context afforded him by the novel as a whole.

I

The most significant, and the most disregarded, aspect of *Sanctuary* is the novel's preoccupation with children and childishness, and with the inevitable participation of these children in evil. This theme of the inevitable participation of the young in the world of adult evil underlies and informs two of the novel's most comic episodes: the sojourn of the two Snopes boys in Miss Reba's whore-house (which they take to be a boarding-house), and the same madam's genteel beer party. Certainly the broad outline of the episode in which the Snopes boys discover, only gradually and after some weeks of residence, the real nature of their "hotel" suggests the transition from a kind of "innocence" to knowledge. This same theme is apparent in the episode following Red's funeral, when Miss Reba and her fellow madams entertain themselves with polite conversation over beer and gin. Uncle Bud, the bullet-headed little boy of five or six, has struck at one of Miss Reba's dogs:

The dog's head snapped around, its teeth clicking, its half-hidden eyes bright and malevolent. The boy recoiled. "You bite me, you thon bitch," he said.

"Uncle Bud!" the fat woman said, her round face, rigid in fatty folds and streaked with tears, turned upon the boy in shocked surprise, the plumes nodding precariously above it. . . . "The very ideal!" the fat woman said. "How in the world he can learn such words on an Arkansaw farm, I don't know."

"They'll learn meanness anywhere," Miss Reba said.

A moment later one of the ladies asks about Miss Reba's two boarders, the Snopes boys:

"Is them two nice young fellows still with you, Miss Reba?"

"Yes," Miss Reba said. "I think I got to get shut of them, though. I aint specially tender-hearted, but after all it aint no use in helping young folks to learn this world's meanness until they have to. I already had to stop the girls running around the house without no clothes on, and they don't like it."

The "world's meanness," of course, is only Miss Reba's crude vision of the world of human evil. Elsewhere in the novel the idea of the young becoming aware of human evil and of their own participation in it is placed in more traditional contexts, as in the following meditation of Temple while in the Memphis brothel:

She was thinking about half-past-ten-oclock. The hour for dressing for a dance, if you were popular enough not to have to be on time. The air would be steamy with recent baths, and perhaps powder in the light like chaff in barn-lofts, and they looking at one another, comparing, talking whether you could do more damage if you could just walk out on the floor like you were now. Some wouldn't, mostly ones with short legs. Some of them were all right, but they just wouldn't. They wouldn't say why. The worst one of all said boys thought all girls were ugly except when they were dressed. She said the Snake had been seeing Eve for several days and never noticed her until Adam made her put on a fig leaf. How do you know? they said, and she said because the Snake was there before Adam, because he was the first one thrown out of heaven: he was there all the time. But that wasn't what they meant and they said, How do you know? and Temple thought of her kind of backed up against the dressing table

and the rest of them in a circle around her with their combed hair and their shoulders smelling of scented soap and the light powder in the air and their eyes like knives until you could almost watch her flesh where the eyes were touching it, and her eyes in her ugly face courageous and frightened and daring, and they all saying, How do you know? until she told them and held up her hand and swore she had. That was when the youngest one turned and ran out of the room. She locked herself in the bath and they could hear her being sick.

The teen-age theodicy of this passage is not, presumably, Faulkner's own, yet the view of the world, the flesh and the devil it expresses relates directly to a view of the world explored and probed by the novel as a whole. For without making any great claim for theological nicety on Faulkner's part, it is yet essential to understand that much of the shocking impact of *Sanctuary* derives ultimately from the fact that Faulkner is working from, and within, a certain Southern metaphysic which has, in some of its more rigorous and puritanical aspects, at least a tendency towards a kind of Manichaeism, a tendency to equate sex with evil and to view nature as totally depraved. The harsh and stark assumptions which Faulkner has chosen to explore in the novel are, for all practical purposes, closely akin to those of Calvin, especially as they might be suggested by such a passage from Calvin as this:

And therefore infants themselves, as they bring their condemnation into the world with them, are rendered obnoxious to punishment by their own sinfulness, not by the sinfulness of another. For though they have not yet produced the fruits of their iniquity, yet they have the seed of it within them; even their whole nature is as it were a seed of sin, and therefore cannot but be odious and abominable to God. . . . For our nature is not only destitute of all good, but is so fertile in all evils that it cannot remain inactive . . . every thing in man, the understanding and will, the soul and body, is polluted and engrossed by . . . concupiscence.

This is not to imply, of course, that Faulkner read Calvin

and then wrote *Sanctuary*. Faulkner may never have read the *Institutes* at all, and Calvin is only cited here as a convenient background against which we may view the theme of the novel as a whole, and also against which we may view one of the dominant symbols of the novel—Ruby Lamar's baby. This infant appears in scene after scene throughout *Sanctuary*, silently expressing by its blighted and ubiquitous presence the agony to which it and all the other "children" of the book have been born. The baby was born out of wedlock, a point made perhaps to suggest that it was "born in sin," fathered by Lee Goodwin. Twice it is described as lying as if it were crucified. On other occasions it lies with "its hands upflung beside its head, as though it had died in the presence of an agony which had not had time to touch it." Born in sin, Faulkner seems to say, the child is already blighted by the evil inherent in human nature, an evil of which the child is not yet aware, but an evil which it will inevitably "learn" and perpetuate.

The growth and fructification of the "seed of sin" within all children is, then, the major area of human experience explored by the novel. Moreover, an awareness or recognition of this maturation process, in one's self or in others, is seen as a kind of death, an emphasis of the novel which vividly recalls the passage in Genesis where God says that Adam and Eve will surely die if they eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Horace Benbow expresses this idea clearly when he says that

perhaps it is upon the instant that we realize, admit, that there is a logical pattern to evil, that we die, he thought, thinking of the expression he had once seen in the eyes of a dead child, and of other dead: the cooling indignation, the shocked despair fading, leaving two empty globes in which the motionless world lurked profoundly in miniature.

It is this idea too which gives symbolic significance to the

death of Tommy just before Temple's shocking experience of evil at the hands of Popeye, the rape which deprives her of any "innocence" she may be thought to have had and forcibly introduces her to the depravity for which she had an affinity from the start. Tommy is a thirty-year-old child. Feeble-minded, he cannot "grow up" to adult awareness of evil, cannot mature in evil. After his death the townspeople remember him only as "barefoot, hatless, with his rapt, empty gaze and his cheek bulged innocently by a peppermint jaw-breaker." But, killed by Popeye the instant before Temple's rape, Tommy's death serves to suggest, in somewhat ritualistic fashion, the "death" of Temple's "childhood" and her introduction to adult and evil "reality." That she has only entered into a kind of death is also plainly indicated by the conclusion of the novel. Listening to a concert in the Luxembourg Gardens, she "seemed to follow with her eyes the waves of music, to dissolve into the dying brasses, across the pool and the opposite semi-circle of trees where at sombre intervals the dead tranquil queens in stained marble mused, and on into the sky lying prone and vanquished in the embrace of the season of rain and death."

It is in terms of Temple herself that the image and idea of childishness has its most obvious development. Throughout her stay in the decayed Frenchman's Bend mansion her appearance and manner repeatedly evoke the traditional images of childhood. She peers "around the door with the wide, abashed curiosity of a child." She has been "playing at it [sex]," she is told by Ruby, the woman who has seen her lover shot down at her feet by her own father and who has prostituted herself for Goodwin. Temple is told she is not "meeting kids" now, but still she looks like an "elongated and leggy infant in her scant dress and uptilted hat." Later she sits on the cot at Frenchman's Bend, looking quite "small,

her very attitude an outrage to muscle and tissue of more than seventeen and more compatible with eight or ten." She is "long-legged, thin armed, with high small buttocks—a small childish figure no longer quite a child, nor yet quite a woman." On the way to Memphis with Popeye she opens "her mouth in that round, hopeless expression of a child." In Miss Reba's establishment, "Lying on her back, her legs close together, she began to cry, hopelessly and passively, like a child in a dentist's waiting-room." Such examples as these by no means exhaust the images and associations of childhood with which Faulkner invests Temple, nor do they suggest the many similar images which characterize most of the incidental figures in the novel: the crowds of college students Horace Benbow encounters on the train, with their puppyish squeals and pawings; Gowan Stevens, one of the "little shirt-tale boys" who "are too young to realize that people don't break the law just for a holiday." What happens to these children is analogous to what happens to Miss Reba's two woolly, shapeless dogs: "savage, petulant, spoiled, the flatulent monotony of their sheltered lives snatched up without warning by an incomprehensible moment of terror and fear of bodily annihilation at the very hands which symbolized by ordinary the licensed tranquillity of their lives."

II

Temple's experience is the exemplification, pushed to a terrible extreme, of the novel's assumption that the maturing process is inevitably a process of learning about one's own involvement in evil. The experience may come violently, shockingly, as with Temple; it may come less violently, though hardly less vulgarly, as with Benbow's step-daughter, Little Belle.

It is in the person of Horace Benbow, however, that the

meaning of *Sanctuary* is best perceived. The novel is far more his story than it is Temple's, for it is in and through his development and perceptions that we ourselves arrive at an understanding of the book's meaning. Usually Benbow is dismissed as the ineffectual idealist, but this is too much of an oversimplification. He is the most fully rounded of the novel's characters, and he undergoes a development that is analogous to that of Temple and all the other "children" in the book. He too becomes acquainted with the night.

Benbow is, as critics have noted, an idealist, and his development in the novel is toward an awareness of the "reality" postulated by the book. We should note carefully, however, the metaphorical terms of his idealism. During the course of Goodwin's imprisonment, for example, Benbow is unable to comprehend Goodwin's fear of Popeye. Goodwin, on the other hand, thinks Benbow's trust in human justice to be naïve and childish. At one point he says to Benbow: "What sort of men have you lived with all your life? In a nursery?"

In a sense Benbow has lived the protected life of a nursery. He has always been surrounded and subjugated by women; he is, quite truly, a forty-three-year-old child who has suddenly been confronted with the awful fact of human evil. He is first shocked into awareness by his step-daughter, Little Belle. The extent of his shocked revulsion is made clear at the very beginning of the novel, for it opens with Benbow running, very much like a small boy, away from home. What started him running, he says, was a "rag with rouge on it." He found the rag stuffed behind the mirror in Little Belle's room, and to him it is evidently the sign of his step-daughter's first sexual experience. The fact that Little Belle likes to pick up strange young men on trains and to pet with them in the grape arbor also disturbs Benbow, and he soon begins to have a vision in which the overlay of sweetness and innocence on

Little Belle's face is replaced by the incipient evil lurking just beneath the surface. As he gazes upon Little Belle's photograph,

the image blurred into the high-light, like something familiar seen beneath disturbed though clear water; he looked at the familiar image with a kind of quiet horror and despair, at a face suddenly older in sin than he would ever be, a face more blurred than sweet, at eyes more secret than soft.

Later on, after Benbow has been to Memphis and heard Temple's account of her rape, he returns home and again gazes on the photograph. This time the life of his step-daughter fuses into the experience undergone by Temple:

the face appeared to breathe in his palms in a shallow bath of highlight, beneath the slow, smokelike tongues of invisible honeysuckle. Almost palpable enough to be seen, the scent filled the room and the small face seemed to swoon in a voluptuous languor, blurring still more, fading, leaving upon his eye a soft and fading aftermath of invitation and voluptuous promise and secret affirmation like a scent itself.

Then he knew what that sensation in his stomach meant. He put the photograph down hurriedly and went to the bathroom. He opened the door running and fumbled at the light. But he had not time to find it and he gave over and plunged forward and struck the lavatory and leaned upon his braced arms while the shucks set up a terrific uproar beneath her thighs. Lying with her head lifted slightly, her chin depressed like a figure lifted down from a crucifix, she watched something black and furious go roaring out of her pale body.

Since it is Benbow himself who equates Popeye's smell with "that black stuff that ran out of Bovary's mouth," it does not seem too ingenious to extend the reference to the "something black and furious" which goes roaring out of Little Belle's (or Temple's) pale body, or to the vomiting of the young girl in the dormitory when she is made aware for the first time of the sexual experience of her girl friend, or even ultimately to the vomiting of the little boy, Uncle Bud, when he gets drunk on beer at Miss Reba's, to Gowan Stevens' vomiting

when he comes to his own miserable little awareness, and to Benbow's vomiting in the passage just cited. All these instances illustrate, with varying degrees of comedy and pathos, the shock resulting from first experience with adult evil. Safeguarded as he has been by the cloak of maternal solicitude and by his idealistic beliefs in the traditional code of the gentleman, Benbow's experience of "sex" and "evil" and "reality," as these are defined and for all practical purposes *equated* in the novel, has been much delayed.

Benbow is a lawyer who believes that justice will always triumph and that God is a Gentleman Who will see that a certain decency is maintained in human affairs. Opposed to his view, of course, is the whole weight of the novel's action, but perhaps his point of view is best contrasted with that of his Aunt Jenny, a realist who manages to view life clearly and to be compassionate and decent at the same time. When Benbow states that he cannot "stand idly by and see injustice," Aunt Jenny remarks: "You won't ever catch up with injustice, Horace." Appalled by what Temple experiences as a result of Gowan Stevens' folly, Benbow cannot reconcile himself to the fact that a woman may be exposed to the most monstrous forms of evil through mere human foolishness. To this Aunt Jenny responds by asking him if he intends to "start some kind of roach campaign?" Benbow thinks that evil can be legislated out, stamped out, of existence. He would like to have a law passed which would make it obligatory "upon everyone to shoot any man less than fifty years old that makes, buys, sells or thinks whiskey." Then, he thinks, such things as Temple's rape would not occur. He thinks it reassuring to say to Goodwin: "You've got the law, justice, civilization" on your side. He believes that evil can be cleansed from human nature, that it can be "removed, cauterized out of the old and tragic flank of the world."

We should note that Benbow, no matter how pure and idealistic his motives, is constantly under the suspicion of all the other members of the community, including Aunt Jenny. Benbow is suspected by Clarence Snopes of going to the Memphis brothel not merely to find Temple, but also for purposes of debauchery. Ruby Lamar thinks he wishes to be paid for his legal services by sleeping with her, and this is also the view of Aunt Jenny and everyone else. And the community's assumptions, indeed, are the assumptions so starkly explored and revealed, and to a great extent confirmed, by the action of the novel. This unflagging suspicion of motives which characterizes the community's view of human nature is not simply an affinity for evil; in a world such as that depicted in *Sanctuary* it is rather, as Faulkner himself says at one point, the course of "practical wisdom."

Benbow's trust in the law and in justice invites, of course, the most painful disillusionment. The evil defined by the actions and events in *Sanctuary* is seen to be too much of the essence of human nature for any legal cauterization. To drive this point home Faulkner presents us with two trials, those of Goodwin and Popeye, which are such savagely ironic miscarriages of justice. In each trial a man is convicted and then executed for a crime he did not commit. Faulkner goes to the extreme of coincidence in his anxiety for the reader to notice the common element in the two trials. In each case the defendant's lawyer is ineffectual, the two juries are out exactly eight minutes each, and the verdicts are the same. The same ineffectual nature of human, as well as divine, justice is conveyed earlier when Temple tries to stave off the horror of her situation at Frenchman's Bend by saying to herself again and again, "My father's a judge. My father's a judge."

Benbow emerges from the courtroom in which Goodwin is wrongfully condemned, because of Temple's perjury, "like

an old man, with a drawn face." Crushed by his new awareness, he returns to the home and woman from whom he had fled. He has learned, presumably, that one cannot "run away" from evil, and he is also to be seen as overwhelmed by the knowledge that his own good intentions have contributed, directly or indirectly, to Goodwin's violent death in a bonfire.

III

If the above account of the novel's main issues and themes is in any way correct, then it would appear that Popeye is representative of something other than a kind of "modernism." For one thing, there is the comparison of Popeye to the black stuff that pours out of Emma Bovary's mouth, a blackness which is certainly to be equated with evil and corruption. This symbol in turn relates Popeye to all the other vomiting which takes place in Faulkner's characters when they first participate in adult evil. Popeye is called "the little black man," he wears black suits, he has eyes like black rubber knobs. Popeye is the blackness, the vomit, the evil.

Just as important, however, is the fact that Popeye is repeatedly described as having the body of a child. He twists and pinches "cigarettes in his little, doll-like hands." He lurks around corners, "smoking his cigarettes, like a sullen and sick child." To Temple, Popeye's arm "felt frail, no larger than a child's." In his childhood a doctor had said of him: "he will never be a man, properly speaking. With care he will live sometime longer. But he will never be any older than he is now."

The effect which Faulkner achieves by placing full-blown and cold adult depravity in the body of a child is very similar to the effect Swift achieves in placing perfect rationality in the bodies of his horses, the Houyhnhnms. A monster is the result in both instances, but in *Sanctuary* it is a monster which

places in transparent clarity the main assumption that Faulkner has chosen to explore: the assumption, that is, that in each child there is a seed of sin or evil which will in time ripen into full iniquity. The evil which exists in the other children of the novel as a kind of potency, is seen to exist in the childish body of Popeye in full actuality. This juxtaposition of his childlike body with his full-blown adult depravity is a distortion, but one by which the mind is given, in a moment of startling superimposure, a vision of the seed and of the fruit into which it will ripen (much as the "crib" in which Temple is raped suggests not only the cradle but also the stall of the prostitute). It is perhaps the grimmest representation in all literature of the idea that the child is father to the man.

The grotesque duality of Popeye's nature is such that he exists primarily on the level of symbolic significance; he has the "depthless quality of stamped tin," as Faulkner says. And it is in terms of this grotesque duality of his nature that we are to account for the fact that he cannot spend satisfactorily the money he makes, cannot drink the whiskey he bootlegs, cannot enjoy the woman he "rapes." He has all the motives, desires and instincts of adult evil, but his childlike body provides him with none of the means for satisfying his desires.

The monstrous quality of Popeye's existence makes him appear not only inhuman but also inscrutable, and thus he reflects the face which evil always offers to the human understanding. This inscrutability is dramatized in the closing episode of his life, when he is shown to be inhumanly indifferent to his own death. We may see in Popeye an embodiment of the evil within men, but he must finally be left as essentially mysterious. All the good artist has ever been able to do is to give us a name for evil, and thereby perhaps make its darkness visible.

IV

The world of *Sanctuary* is a world in which God, if He is to be conceived as existing at all, has been reduced to an equation with man himself, identified with, and comprehended solely in terms of, human existence. Thus when Benbow says of God that "at least He's a gentleman," Ruby Lamar replies, "I always thought of Him as a man." The theme of the crucifixion permeates *Sanctuary*, but it is man himself, whether it be Ruby Lamar's baby or Temple Drake or Lee Goodwin, who is presented as the crucified. Operating as it does within the framework of the Christian myth, the novel yet understands the myth solely in human terms. Instead of Christian theology, Faulkner gives us a kind of Christian humanology.

The world of *Sanctuary* is the world envisioned by Temple as she lies in the Memphis whore-house. She watches the face of a clock in the semi-darkness, and soon the round orifice of the clock seems to change to a "disc suspended in nothingness, the original chaos, and change in turn to a crystal ball holding in its still and cryptic depths the ordered chaos of the intricate and shadowy world upon whose scarred flanks the old wounds whirl onward at dizzy speed into darkness lurking with new disasters." Again and again we are given this image of a world marooned in space, a dying planet revolving to the moment when it will be a dead mass suspended in nothingness.

The inhabitants of this dying planet are continually exhibited as the victims and prisoners of the very pattern of evil which they themselves help to create and perpetuate, though it is also a pattern which they never really understand. Faulkner imparts the sense of this by two overlapping patterns of imagery, one of which repeatedly describes the way in which men and women are seized by the scruff of

the neck, like kittens or puppies, and then hurled into disaster by those who in their turn are also ultimately seized by the neck. The other pattern of imagery also focuses on man's neck, and again man's neck is repeatedly seen as stretched, or prepared, or shaven for the noose, the knife, or the guillotine. Thus when Benbow boards a train he finds the day-coach filled "with bodies sprawled half into the aisle as though in the aftermath of a sudden and violent destruction, with dropped heads, open-mouthed, their throats turned profoundly upward as though waiting the stroke of knives."

Of the agony and terror suffered by the inhabitants of this world there can be no doubt. Almost all the characters are eventually presented in terms which recall the pathetic and hopeless grieving of little children in the face of incomprehensible suffering, even though these same children are destined to grow up and in their turn cause the most intense agony to themselves and to others. All of them have difficulty in breathing the air of this world into which they have come: even Gowan Stevens, snoring helplessly and painfully through his shattered nose; even Miss Reba, gasping in horrid and painful asthmatic breaths her grief for Mr. Binford; even Ruby's baby, who breathes in "weak, whistling gasps."

The world of *Sanctuary* offers little or nothing in the way of protection from suffering or in the way of solace for loss. It is a world of darkness in which the only gleam of light is that cast by intermittent fireflies, in which the only sound to come to man is that of some nameless wood-bird—three bars, perhaps, "in monotonous repetition: a sound meaningless and profound out of a suspirant and peaceful following silence" which seems to strand man in uttermost darkness. It is a world in which the very air is spent and defunctive, in which all life dies and all death lives, a world that is flatulent, stale and moribund.

That Faulkner regards the inhabitants of this world with a kind of savage pity seems undeniable. Stark and strange and stern as his vision of man is, he yet presents man as the victim not only of himself, but also as the victim of a world, and a pattern of evil, for which he is not fully responsible: man is not only the crucifier, but the crucified. To say this is not, of course, to minimize the shocking horror of the world one finds in *Sanctuary*; it is rather to underscore and emphasize the horror. The true and ultimate shock of the novel is not to be found in the single grotesque episode in which a young girl is raped with a corn-cob. It is to be found in the larger pattern of evil and injustice of which this episode is one mere instance. It is a pattern of evil and a vision of the world which is hardly comparable with any thing else Faulkner has written, though it does have important unexplored connections with the rest of his work. In this novel at least, Faulkner presents us with the bleak assertion that the human body is not a temple of the holy spirit, and with the equally bleak assertion that, for man, there is no sanctuary.

AUBREY WILLIAMS